

Key Text: John 15:8

“This is to my Fathers’ glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

What is Spiritual Fruitfulness?

Spiritual fruit is the evidence of a healthy spiritual life. The fruit of the spirit is like the fruit of an apple tree, you can see the fruit and taste it. This analogy is especially good because of what it implies about the production of fruit. The fruit growing on trees is always natural and it is never faked or “contrived” and this is how it should be with spiritual fruit. The evidence of your spiritual life should not be something you fake when you are around certain people and it should not be the product of your “WILL-POWER” as if it is a means of “SELF IMPROVEMENT”. **Spiritual fruit is produced naturally out of your relationship with God.** So, it is possible for a Christian to be known by the type of fruit they produce. (Matthew 7:17-20) The Fruit of the Spirit will always consist of three main qualities; **goodness, righteousness, and truth.** (Ephesians 5:9) This means that nothing about the fruit of the spirit will contradict with, what is beneficial to others, what is holy & just, or what is the truth of the gospel message. **God the Father clearly desires for each of us to produce more and more spiritual fruit.** (John 15:2,5,16)

FOUR TYPES OF FRUIT-TREES WILL GROW AS EVIDENCE OF THE SPIRIT...



Long-suffering

Joy

Goodness

Love

Peace

Kindness

Gentleness

Meekness

Self-control

Humble

Mourn

Meek

Hunger

Merciful

Pure

Peacemakers

Persecuted

Reviled



Gentle

Meek

Pure

Peaceable

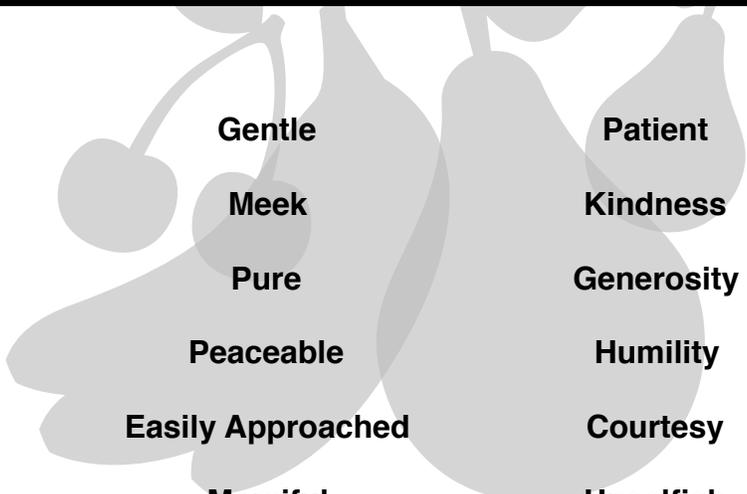
Easily Approached

Merciful

Honest

Impartial

Good Fruit



Patient

Kindness

Generosity

Humility

Courtesy

Unselfish

Good Temper

Righteousness

Sincerity

The Tree of the SPIRIT
Galatians 5:22,23

The Tree of BEATITUDES
Matthew 5:3-11

The Tree of WISDOM
James 3:13,17

The Tree of DIVINE LOVE
1 Corinthians 13:4-8

CULTIVATING FRUITFULNESS

The Fruit of the Holy Spirit begins to grow in us at the moment of salvation. (Colossians 1:5-6) At this same time, the Holy Spirit begins a process of **"CULTIVATION"** in us that is transforming us each day. (Philippians 2:13..."God is at work IN you...") This process of cultivation is one that will continue throughout our lifetime and it will require both **"PRUNING"** and **"ABIDING"**. (Mark 4:26-28; Psalms 92:12-14) Because pruning and abiding are involved with cultivation a Christian must choose to submit to the work of the Holy Spirit or the work of cultivation will not go well. If someone claims to be a disciple of Christ yet their remains a lack of spiritual fruit than that individual is not really a Christian. See. John 15:8 and 1 John 4:7

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE PRUNED?

In the natural, pruning involves a "cutting away". So at its core, the idea of pruning is simply the cutting away of anything that hinders fruitfulness. Distractions, Relationships, Habits, and Ideas are just some examples of what God might cut away in order for you to be more fruitful. Can you see how you participate in the pruning process? See Ephesians 4:22,25. Pruning could also be felt in the discipline of God. You may feel His discipline through a painful loss or difficult circumstances due to sinful attitudes or actions. *These difficulties give us an opportunity to become sweeter or bitter. Hebrews 12:11 states that while discipline is painful, those who are trained by it produce the fruit of righteousness.* Can you see how there are times when God may take something out of your life, or cut something away from you? The choice remains for the disciple to submit to God in "EVERY" situation as the "VINEDRESSER". This is especially difficult if we do not understand why something is cut away. This is the moment that you must trust that God has your best interests in mind. (Jeremiah 29:11) Let Him cut away things in your life that are not pleasing to Him so that more spiritual fruit is produced.

Who is the "VINE"?
See. **John 15:1-8**
What does this analogy mean?

Who is the "BRANCH"?
See. **John 15:5,6**
How does this description affect your self-perceptions?

Who is the "VINEDRESSER"?
See. **John 15:1**
How does this analogy affect your sense of trust?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ABIDE?

The original language here means, **"To be in a close and settled union."** So, if roots must be in the dirt than a Christian must also be in the WORD of God. If a branch must be connected to the vine then you must also be deeply connected to Jesus. this connection is a loving relationship. The proof of this love is the act of obedience to God's will. *See John 6:56 & 14:15.* First John 3:24 states that if we abide in Christ we will keep His commands and that the Holy Spirit will be evidence of our "abiding". So, spiritually speaking, we must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit as we are with any other person. Are you at peace with the Holy Spirit? Is there anything that is uneasy between you and God? What grieves the heart of the Holy Spirit or affects the emotions of God should also affect us. If we choose to abide we must stay on "Good" terms with the Holy Spirit. See (Ephesians 4:30) "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit." If you grieve the Holy Spirit what should you do? Simply, repent and turn away from whatever it is that is breaking God's heart. Pray and trust that God will give you a heart that is "Willing" to turn away from any sin. Through the POWER of GRACE, you will be able to turn away from anything.

NO FRUIT ?????

What happens if you do not respond to God's pruning or if you REFUSE to abide in the vine?

You will not produce any FRUIT.

What Happens if you do not produce any fruit? You will start off by feeling separate from God. If you continue, you will be cut off from God through the hardening of your own heart.